

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES –MARCH 15, 2006

Chairman V. Wilson Freeland called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Introductory Comments made by Chairman Freeland

- Chairman Freeland recognized the presence of Candus Thomson from the Baltimore Sun.

Approval for Minutes from February 2006 Meeting

- Chairman Freeland asked the members if they had any additions, changes, edits, or clarification for the February 15, 2006 Meeting Minutes, which were mailed in advanced.
 - 1) A brief discussion occurred among the members and staff regarding the status of the Wildlife and Heritage Service budget.
 - 2) Commissioner Adams requested the change on page 3, the fifth bullet from the top of page 3 to read, *“With autumn and winter sora rails at historically low levels in Maryland, Commissioner Adams questioned the maintenance of a 25-bird bag limit on the species. He argued that bad limits and hunting seasons should be adjusted in relation to game population size and a high bag limit on sora rails is inconsistent with that practice.”*
 - 3) Chairman Freeland requested the change on page 2, under 3) (b) subtitle Motion amended to read, *“Motion carried with 2-no and 3-yes.”*
 - 4) **Motion:**
 - (a) The minutes of the February 15, 2006 were approved as corrected.
 - (b) The motion was seconded. Motion was carried.

Modifications to the March 15, 2006 Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda

- The MD. Park Service Superintendent requested that the Maryland Park Service Update be removed from the WAC meeting agenda. Staff will no longer attend unless the Commission has specifically solicited their attendance.
- Chairman Freeland outlined additional changes to the agenda:
 - 1) Replace the Maryland Park Service Update to the Maryland Farm Bureau Crop Damage Survey,
 - 2) Revisit the WHS Budget, The December’s Constituent Letter, and Responses to the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee were added under “Old Business,”
 - 3) Conservationist, Farmer, and Employee of the Year Nominations were added under “New Business.”
- **Motion:**
 - 1) Chairman Freeland moved to accept the changes to the March 15, 2006 Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 - 2) Motion was seconded. Motion was adopted.

2006 Legislative Session Update

- Presentation given by Paul Peditto, Director and Mark Hoffman, Associate Director.
 - (a) The list of 2006 Legislative Session Bills affecting the Wildlife and Heritage Service was handed out to members **[Attachment A]**.
 - (b) The SB 766 Hunting – Exemptions from License and Stamp Requirement was amended to produce a negative fiscal impact to the Wildlife and Heritage Service.

2006 – 2008 Hunting Regulations Proposals

- Presentation given by Robert Beyer, Associate Director.
- Results from Public Meetings **[Attachment B]**.
- Recommendations to the Wildlife Advisory Commission (WAC) **[Attachment C]**.
 - 1) The State continues to have liberal resident geese bag limits to help with population management. Concerns regarding wanton waste were raised but the U.S. Fish and Wildlife made wanton waste illegal many years ago, “No person shall kill or cripple any migratory game bird without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird, and retain it in his/her actual custody.”
 - 2) Chairman Freeland asked for copies of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) proposals.
 - (a) Once the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has finalized the proposals, then staff will provide that information to the Commission.
 - (b) As soon as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provide the states its final ruling, then WHS will develop outreach strategies to advance the proposals in Maryland.
 - (c) At the July 19, 2006 WAC meeting, staff will present the USFWS frameworks, which will include the comments regarding the August resident Canada goose season proposal.
 - 3) **Motions:**
 - (a) **Managed Hunt Permit** – The permit simplifies the multiple fee structure system, improves availability and provides a one time cost for access to specific managed hunts on identified DNR properties. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. **Motion was carried.**

- (b) **Rails and snipe** – Require nontoxic shot be used while hunting these species. Commissioner Fratz moved to accept. **Motion was carried.**
- (c) **Rails** – Reduce the bag limit for king rails to one per day. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. **Motion was carried.**
- (d) **Beaver** – Eliminate beaver trapping zones. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. **Motion was carried with 1-opposed.**
- (e) **Beaver and Otter** – Run the beaver and otter trapping seasons concurrently. Commissioner Fratz moved to accept. **Motion was carried.**
- (f) **Trapping Restrictions** – Endorse modifications to trap size and trap placement. Commissioner Brown moved to accept. **Motion was carried with 1-opposed.**
- (g) **Black Bear** – Expand the hunt area to include Garrett and all of Allegany County. Commissioner Fratz moved to accept. Motion was seconded.
 - (i) Commissioner Lamp submitted a written motion to “Request that you vote against black bear hunting as prescribed in DNR’s proposed hunting regulations.” **[Appendix I]**
 - (ii) The results of the vote were 4-ayes and 1-nay; **motion was carried.**
- (h) **Black Bear** – Require individuals who kill or wound a bear in defense of a person or animal to report it to us within 24 hours. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. Motion was seconded. Motion was carried.
- (i) **Wild Turkey** – Prohibit electronic or motorized decoys. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. Motion was seconded. Motion was carried.
- (j) **Wild Turkey** – Legalize handguns for the fall season. Commissioner Fratz moved to accept. Motion was seconded. **Motion was carried with 1-nay.**
- (k) **Wild Turkey** – Restrict shot size in the fall season to 4, 5, and 6. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. Motion was seconded. Motion was carried.
- (l) **Sika Deer** – Add Caroline and Talbot Counties to the list of counties open for sika deer hunting. Commissioner Julio motioned to accept. Motion was seconded. **Motion was carried with 1-nay.**
- (m) **CWD** – Restrictions on carcass importation and reporting requirements for hunter killed deer and elk. Commissioner Adams moved to accept. Motion was seconded. Motion was carried.
- (n) **The Wildlife Advisory Commission adopted all the 2006 – 2008 Hunting and Trapping Proposals.**

Break from 10:15 a.m. to 10:25 a.m.

Maryland Farm Bureau Crop Damage Survey

- Presentation by Kurt Fuchs, Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) Representative.
- Mr. Fuchs highlighted points from the Maryland Farmers Estimate \$10.5 Million in 2005 Wildlife Related Crop Losses **[Attachment D]**. USDA, National Agriculture Statistics Service, Maryland Field Office was the source of this data.
- The damage losses were attributed to deer, 83.8%; resident geese, 6.4%; migrant geese, 5.8%; groundhogs, 2.1%; bear, 0.9%; other wildlife species, 1%.
- This information has been forwarded to the Deer Project Team to help with the next 10-year Deer Management Plan.

Natural Resources Police Update

- Sergeant Glenn Shultz highlighted the Natural Resources Police Update from February 6, 2006 through February 18, 2006 **[Attachment E]**.
- Commissioners may contact Sergeant Shultz about any case listed by means of e-mail at gshultz@dnr.state.md.us.

2006 Working Agenda

- The USFWS options for resident geese were added to the July 19th WAC Meeting Agenda.

Old Business

- The WHS Budget – At the February meeting, the Commission agreed to have Chairman Freeland compile a letter to Secretary Franks to carry out Commissioner Lamp’s motion. The letter was sent to Secretary Franks.
 - 1) Chairman Freeland had some questions regarding the WHS budget.
 - (a) The current fiscal year has a shortfall of \$330,000.
 - (b) WHS budget is based on special funds, grants, and federal funds revenue that WHS anticipates receiving.
 - (c) The Department target allocation is based on the anticipated revenue. The Department develops its budget based on those numbers and submits those figures to the Department of Budget Management (DBM) for review. (The requested amount (to DBM) is noted on the WHS Budget Chart from the February meeting).
 - (d) DBM reviews the budget – the DBM is the agency that prepares (adds and subtracts) the Administration budget.
 - (e) DBM indicated that the salaries numbers based on the staff are too low; it needs to be \$300,000 more in the WHS budget; which includes cost of living, health insurances, salaries increases, vacancies. DBM budget allowance outlined that the WHS request should be \$6.1 million.

- (f) The WHS is special and federal funded entity, which is a major issue for a state funded unit. When staff prepared the WHS's 2007 Budget Request, the WHS had fully utilized all of WHS reserved special and federal funds that staff had thought would be available to WHS. WHS are restricted with revenue options.
- (g) Once the General Assembly acts upon the allowance and pass the budget bill, then it becomes appropriation – the appropriation is the legal authority to spend money.
- (h) WHS has survived because of these three elements:
 - (i) 2002 Hunting License fee increase,
 - (ii) Reserve Funds,
 - (iii) State Wildlife Grants (SWG) (WHS staff members were able to use some of SWGs for current projects but these grants were assigned to cover new objectives).
- (i) Unfortunately items "i" and "ii" have been exhausted.
- 2) The December's Constituent Letter to the WAC has been given to the NRP leadership – no report to date.
- 3) Responses to the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee – Chairman Freeland has received an acceptance e-mail to serve on the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee from Scott Gole, Assistant Director of Recreational Parks and Culture Montgomery Village Foundation Inc. Chairman Freeland will forward copies of Mr. Scott Gole's acceptance e-mail to the Commission.
 - (a) Motion: Motion was granted to accept Mr. Scott Gole as the first member of the Urban Wildlife Subcommittee.
 - (b) Motion was seconded. Motion was adopted.
- Commissioner Adams updated the Commission on the Ducks Unlimited Banquet through the University of Maryland; this is a new chapter for the University. The event was a success. The new chapter at the University of Maryland was able to raise \$5,000.

New Business

- Changing Wildlife Advisory Commission meeting time - Discussion
 - 1) Commissioner Lamp asked the Commission to consider changing the meeting times from 9:30 a.m. to an evening time to allow more public participation. Commissioners ensued into discussion.
 - 2) **Motion:** Commissioner Julio moved to leave the WAC meetings at the current time slot. Motion was seconded. Motion carried.
- Conservationist, Farmer, and Employee of the Year Nominations
 - 1) Annually, the Commission reviews and submits nominees for the Conservationist, Farmer, and Employee of the Year.
 - 2) Commissioners discussed different venues to present the Conservationist, Farmer, and Employee of the Year Awards. No consensus.
- Commissioners agreed to forego the coffee and the donuts for future meetings.

Public Comment

- Chairman Freeland received no written or electronic comments.
- Commissioner Lamp provided the website from a group that is looking for alternative solutions to solve deer problems in Maryland – the website is www.deersolutionsmd.com.

New Appointments

- Assistant Secretary Mike Slattery announced that Mr. Freeland has been reappointed as a member of the WAC.
- Mr. Ed Fry been appointed as a member of the WAC.

Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A.M. The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room, in Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	L. Adams, R. Brown, G. Fratz, W. Freeland, L. Julio, J. Lamp
Guests:	D. Baker III
Media:	C. Thomson
Staff:	B. Beyer, K. Blizzard, M. Hoffman, D. Hotton, B. King, P. Peditto, G. Shultz, T. Spencer
Absent:	C. Garner, R. Pascal, J. Scarborough